

was a fierce advocate in Lansing for our Upper Peninsula way of life.

Tom was a strong and universally respected voice, confronting challenging issues head-on and working across the aisle for the benefit of his constituents. His unwavering commitment to his family, his faith, and his community is unquestionable. The entire State of Michigan is a better place because of him.

To Tom's family and friends, Isaiah 41:10 says:

Do not fear, for I am with you. Do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.

Please join me in honoring the extraordinary life of Senator Tom Casperson.

AMERICAN PEOPLE WAITING FOR COVID RELIEF

(Ms. SCANLON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SCANLON. Mr. Speaker, this week, December's rent and mortgage payments came due for millions of Americans, marking another gut-wrenching deadline for families who have been forced to make the impossible decision between putting food on the table or keeping a roof overhead.

We have been asking for months for the Senate to take up one of the relief packages that the House has passed and sent for consideration or for the Senate to come up with its own COVID relief proposal. While there has finally been some movement this week, it is way overdue.

My constituents cannot wait any longer. As the coronavirus surges yet again in my region, I hear every single day from folks who have exhausted every resource to scrape by, but they cannot make ends meet without more relief.

These are folks like Denise from Linwood. Last spring, she and her husband both lost their jobs in the hospitality industry. They have two kids at home learning virtually. Now they are faced with the expiration of unemployment benefits, and they fear eviction come January.

Ann from Wayne is a schoolteacher who is trying to get a COVID test so she can take care of her elderly mother and do her job, but she has had to jump through hoop after hoop because we still lack a national testing strategy.

My constituents and our local officials are doing everything in their power to feed their families and stay safe. It is past time that the Federal Government does the same. America is waiting.

HONORING SENATOR TOM CASPERSON

(Mr. TIFFANY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TIFFANY. Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up on the comments from the Congressman from the First District of Michigan.

Today, I recognize a good friend and great American, Tom Casperson, who passed away this weekend. Tom lived in Representative BERGMAN's district in Escanaba, Michigan.

I knew Tom as a State senator when he worked on numerous issues across State lines with me. The Good Neighbor Authority promoting better management of our national forests originated at a hearing Tom and I put together in Breitung Township, Michigan. Tom Casperson may have had a greater impact on Upper Peninsula issues in the Michigan Legislature than anyone who served the Upper Peninsula.

While I knew Tom as a State senator, he will be remembered for far more than that, including as a man of great faith.

Mr. Speaker, I send my deepest sympathies to Tom's wife, Diane, and their family.

It has been a great privilege to have known such a fine man. May Tom Casperson rest in peace.

DECRIMINALIZING CANNABIS

(Mr. EVANS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, in my city of Philadelphia and across the country, people of color are thrown in jail more and with harsher sentences than White people for the same cannabis-related crimes.

Cannabis is one of the fastest growing U.S. industries, but Federal law keeps many businesses of color out of this market. That is why I urge my colleagues to support passage of a jobs bill, the MORE Act. It would decriminalize cannabis at the Federal level and expunge prior Federal convictions related to marijuana. Half of all States have already decriminalized cannabis.

This jobs bill would also create the opportunity trust fund, which would generate grant programs to provide services and funds to those most negatively impacted by the war on drugs. This includes the equitable cannabis licensing program that I introduced in the Homegrown Act.

The House and Senate need to pass the MORE Act now, as the growing cannabis industry is an important economic development tool for communities of color like mine. Let's pass this jobs bill.

CONGRATULATING DR. DIANA GREENE

(Mr. RUTHERFORD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Duval County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Diana Greene.

This week, she was named the Florida Superintendent of the Year by the Florida Association of District School Superintendents, and we are all incredibly proud of her well-deserved recognition.

Over these last 5 years, including during Dr. Greene's leadership, the Duval graduation rate increased from 76 percent to 86 percent, an amazing accomplishment.

She has also helped to improve safety and security within our schools and fought to secure additional educational funding for Duval County Public Schools. Dr. Greene is an excellent example and mentor to both educators and students alike.

On behalf of the Fourth Congressional District of Florida, I thank Dr. Greene for her commitment to education and for working hard every day to make Duval County Public Schools a place where students can learn, grow, and thrive.

CALLING FOR COVID RELIEF

(Mr. LEVIN of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEVIN of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of every American who has lost a loved one because of this pandemic. I rise for those who have lost their jobs or who are struggling to make ends meet in the wake of this virus. I rise for the doctors, the nurses, the caregivers, and the first responders who put themselves at risk every day as they try to save lives.

These folks in my district and across the Nation know that the enemy is not our neighbors or our political opponents. The enemy is this virus. And they are counting on us to come together to provide relief.

We must act urgently to provide State and local governments with the funding they need to maintain essential workers and provide critical services, including in public safety and education.

We must act so that small businesses don't shutter their doors, laying off the good people who live and work in our communities.

The American people cannot and should not have to wait any longer. I urge my colleagues to put their differences aside and treat this emergency like our lives depend on it—because they do.

CONGRATULATING RITEDOSE

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, congratulations to Ritedose Corporation of Columbia, a South Carolina company on the front lines of America's spectacular effort to secure a coronavirus vaccine.